



Supporting Good Decisions

Integrated Impact Assessment (IIA) Form

Title of Policy/ Proposal	East Lothian Integration Joint Board Strategic Plan 2025-2030
IIA Date	21 January 2026
Facilitator	Kate Thornback, Equalities and Engagement Officer, ELHSCP
Lead officer	Claire Goodwin, Performance and Improvement Manager, ELHSCP
Sign off by Head of Service	Laura Kerr, General Manager – Planning and Performance, ELHSCP

Further information about the Strategic Plan can be viewed [here](#).

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Summary of the Integrated Impacts Session *Note to reader: The impacts identified are a reflection of the experiences and knowledge within the room when the assessment was completed. Impacts outside of those identified may exist or arise over time.*

- The session was held over 1.5 hours in person at Musselburgh East Community Learning Centre and had 17 participants representing parts of East Lothian HSCP, East Lothian Council, third sector partners (VCEL, Carers of East Lothian, Penumbra, Changes, Care Support Scotland) and members and representatives of the East Lothian community. Attendees are listed in **Appendix 1**.
- Participants of the session raised a wide range of topics and opportunities for improvements, such as:
 - Alternative definitions (e.g. how the concept of community is described),
 - Ways to collaborate, enable and recognise the role of the third sector in health and social care,
 - Suggestions for how to communicate the plan,
 - Ways to improve equality and fairness for the community through addressing existing inequalities through the plan such as the rural/urban access divide, socio economic disadvantage and other resource or access-based challenges and barriers faced by the community.
- No major negative impacts have been identified. All other negative impacts identified were accompanied by suggestions for improvement which are being considered for integration into the final Strategic Plan or recording for use when the implementation /delivery plan is written by the lead (Performance and Improvement Manager). More information can be found in Section 4 of this report.
 - Key negative impact – **Digital Exclusion** - Potential negative impacts on older people and those experiencing barriers to using technology will be monitored and addressed as part of this IIA process.
- A range of positive impacts were raised. More information can be found in Section 4 of this report.

Work to consider how these impacts can be integrated into the plan or other appropriate workstreams will be taken forward by the IJB and Strategic Plan lead.

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Groups Impacted

Protected Characteristic Groups:

- Age - Older age groups in particular in relation to the potential for digital exclusion, experience of barriers to access related with lower proportions of car drivers, higher proportions in rural areas and higher numbers living in single person households.
- Disability – In relation to access to digital and technology-based care and potential for negative impacts related to digital exclusion/different communication needs.
- Sex – Indirectly, via the over-representation of women as carers.
- Race/ethnicity – Indirectly via higher number of people in minority racial groups and ethnicities requiring information in languages other than English.
- Sexual orientation – No impacts were identified in the session.
- Religion or belief – No impacts were identified in the session.
- Pregnancy and Maternity – Legally applicable only in relation to employment.
- Marriage or Civil Partnership – Legally applicable only in relation to employment.
- Gender Reassignment – None identified.

Other Marginalised Groups:

- People living in rural areas experiencing barriers to accessing services due to poorer transport connections/higher transport costs.
- Unpaid carers
- Farmers
- Fishing community
- Single person households

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Key findings

General Comments - Definitions, Roles and Suggested Changes to the Text

Some definitions could benefit from revision/co-production that includes the voices of the third sector to foster inclusivity, improve alignment across the partnership and foster good relations. Text that explains the role of the IJB in communities would be welcomed.

- The definition of community in the 'Core Principles' section to be considered for reworking in co-production with the third sector, especially VCEL, in order to more accurately present the community and improve inclusion.
- The role of the IJB in:
 - Building community capacity to support itself could be explored in text or via another workstream.
 - Community funding and planning.
 - Connecting people.
- Clarity on commissioning (page 21 of the Strategic Plan consultation draft) could assist in aligning the Strategic Plan with community initiatives, partner activities and a focus on outcomes.
- A community member participant highlighted the Hospital at Home service as a service that is already supporting the strategic objectives well. They viewed the service as having potential to play a key role in the Strategic Plan and suggested that support for this service in the plan text could be strengthened.

Impacts

Digitalisation

This session suggested that this delivery priority will require careful implementation and co-production to avoid negative equality impacts in relation to digital exclusion.

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This delivery priority presents opportunities for better access and participation for technologically confident people, especially younger age groups and marginalised groups such as people with sensory impairment (via Assistive Technologies), people experiencing barriers to accessing daytime services, telephone-based/limited opening hours contact systems and people requiring translation into languages other than English. Inversely, people that are not confident with technology could experience widening inequalities of access leading to worse outcomes than those that can access digital resources.

Rural Inequalities, Marginalised Communities and Cumulative Impacts

The session highlighted that groups marginalised in society for a range of ability-based, sensory, social, cultural, economic and geographical reasons could potentially experience a compounding of barriers to accessing services that were designed to suit the majority (e.g. digitisation, daytime/weekday services, referral pathways reliant on GP access etc). It was highlighted that taking account of this compounding effect may mean thinking about changes for communities that are outside of IJB control/remit, but relevant to conversations about changes/proposals, such as changes in bus connections for rural people reliant on public transport/private hire. Careful and targeting listening, co-design, impact monitoring and evaluation of proposals and changes associated with the Strategic Plan could reduce risks and improve chances of tackling inequalities.

Co-Production and Feedback

A number of suggestions were made that suggested that clearer messaging and communication alongside listening to the community would be welcomed and supported. The new IJB Communications and Engagement Strategy was raised and discussed, with some solutions identified as part of that piece of work. Comments included a suggestion that the Strategic Plan could more strongly commit to exploring and using service user feedback in developing and evaluating services and proposals. Another suggested that making information more accessible and easy to find could improve the community's ability to manage conditions at home, reducing pressure on services/hospitals.

The session raised a positivity but anxiety about transformation and what that would mean for communities in practice when implemented. Participants feel the answer to managing these anxieties was in commitment to continuous community engagement.

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Recommendations:

That the suggestions and impacts identified in this report, especially those under the Key Findings section, are considered for integration into the final version of the Strategic Plan by the lead (Performance and Improvement Manager) and the IJB.

That the SPG/IJB consider the final version of the Strategic Plan for approval and implementation.

The IJB/HSCP agrees to monitor progress on the areas stated in the 'How we will monitor equality impacts' table.

How we will monitor equality impacts:

Actions - These may include financial implications, mitigating actions, actions to maximise positive impacts and risks of cumulative impacts.	Responsible Person	Action due date	Review date
We will consider equality impacts highlighted in this IIA annually. The monitoring and summary will be submitted to SPG/IJB in the first quarter of each calendar year.	Performance and Improvement Manager/IJB	February 2026	February 2027, 2028, 2029 and 2030
We will consider fairness impacts (with a foundation of the Fairer Scotland Duty, but not limited to it) highlighted in this IIA annually. The monitoring and summary will be submitted to SPG/IJB in the first quarter of each calendar year.	Performance and Improvement Manager/IJB	February 2026	February 2027, 2028, 2029 and 2030
Digital Agenda – Monitor impacts on different communities and protected characteristics via engagement with them at all stages of programme development, especially during	General and Service Managers, Performance and Improvement Manager/IJB	Continuous for Service Managers/Leads, annually in February or at	Annually.

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Actions - These may include financial implications, mitigating actions, actions to maximise positive impacts and risks of cumulative impacts.	Responsible Person	Action due date	Review date
design of technology-based solutions to avoid digital exclusion.		another time of year that best suits for IJB.	
Tackling Inequalities – Monitor impacts on protected characteristic and marginalised groups through Annual Performance Report, Equality Mainstreaming Report and through service evaluation.	Performance and Improvement Manager/IJB/Equalities and Engagement Officer	Annually when the Annual Performance Report is developed and put to the IJB, June 2027 for Equality Mainstreaming Report.	
Recognising and Offsetting Cumulative Impacts (especially for marginalised communities and people living in rural places) – 1. Monitor impacts on different communities and protected characteristics via engagement with them at all stages of programme/service change development	Performance and Improvement Manager/IJB/Equalities and Engagement Officer (facilitation)	August 2028	August 2030

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Actions - These may include financial implications, mitigating actions, actions to maximise positive impacts and risks of cumulative impacts.	Responsible Person	Action due date	Review date
2. Monitor impacts through cumulative impact assessments half-way through the term of this Strategic Plan, and at its conclusion.			

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IIA Report

1. What is this IIA about and what might/will change as a result of this proposal?

This impact assessment intends to:

- Identify any **positive impacts** of the Strategic Plan 2025-2030 and consider ways that we can maximise them.
- Identify any **negative impacts** of the Strategic Plan 2025-2030 and consider ways that we can mitigate them.
- Allow space for a range of people in different roles, organisations or parts of the community to consider whether any adjustments could be made to the final draft of the Strategic Plan 2025-2030 that would support the Public Sector Equality and Fairer Scotland Duties. In practice this means considering how the contents of this plan might:
 - Impact people experiencing social, income or health inequalities or disadvantages.
 - 'Cause, address, prevent or end [unlawful behaviour that is banned by the Equality Act 2010](#), including discrimination, harassment and victimisation.
 - Advance equal opportunities between people who have a protected characteristic and those who do not.
 - Foster good relations between people who have a protected characteristic and those who do not'

2. Briefly describe public involvement in this proposal (past, ongoing and planned). Planning and stages

Our engagement planning began in late 2024 with a conversation with Healthcare Improvement Scotland (HIS) in line with recommendations in COSLAs Planning With People. This was to ensure that our plans met requirements that we are obliged to meet for our health delegated services (the services of ours that are delegated to us from NHS Lothian).

The Performance and Improvement Manager (professional lead on the strategy), Senior Communications Officer and Equalities and Engagement Officer were able to discuss our plans for engaging with the community and received guidance and assurance from our Integrated Impact Assessment Report – Version: April 2025

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HIS that our plans were proportional, timely (before, during and after the consultation draft was created) and allowed for people to engage with us in a variety of ways that suited their preferences and communication needs.

This conversation led to an engagement plan with defined stages. You can read more about the different stages in Appendix 2 at the foot of this document.

The scale and duration of our engagement

Our engagement activities began in January 2025 with internal and prescribed consultees via our Strategic Planning Group, moved through several rounds on internal, partner organisation and community focussed phases and ended with our Integrated Impact Assessment on 21 January 2026.

We received over 800 pieces of feedback in total from all activities with the majority of that information being qualitative in the form of spoken feedback at meetings, written responses and open text responses from online surveys.

We drew also on three other key community engagement activities that were conducted in 2025 to allow us to isolate comments relevant to the Strategic Plan and the draft objectives. The key engagement activities were:

- Planning for Older Peoples Services Project
- IJB Equality Outcomes 2025-2029 engagement
- Carers Strategy engagement

Including these engagements, we were able to benefit from 5000+ comments which enriched the picture and helped the professional lead to understand the priorities, ambitions and concerns of East Lothian communities.

Who engaged with us?

- Prescribed consultees, including Volunteer Centre East Lothian, MECOPP, Carers of East Lothian, commissioned contractors, third sector organisations and our partner organisations (NHS Lothian and East Lothian Council).

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- Health and Wellbeing Groups across East Lothian
- Individuals, independent advocacy groups, sports clubs, disability focussed organisations, ethnic minority organisations, community gardens and recreation spaces and libraries.

3. Is the proposal considered strategic under the Fairer Scotland Duty?

Yes.

4. Which impacts were identified and which groups will they affect? Please include suggested mitigations for negative impacts and actions to maximise positive impacts.

Equality, Health and Wellbeing and Human Rights	Affected populations
<p>Positive <u>Defining Community (core principles section)</u>– There is potential to foster better relations between different communities and protected characteristics in East Lothian through careful definition, aligned with VCEL and third sector organisations. The definition has potential to reduce barriers between the health and social care partnership/IJB and different groups of people by using the word ‘people’ and focussing on how we work together. Action: Lead to explore with VCEL and other organisations a co-produced definition of community/communities that better reflects ‘who we are’.</p>	<p>All protected characteristic groups, groups of people in East Lothian that self-identify as a community in.</p>

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Equality, Health and Wellbeing and Human Rights	Affected populations
<p><u>A Catalyst for Connection</u> – There is benefit to highlighting the role of the Strategic Plan in connection people and communities.</p> <p>Action: Lead to explore whether a delivery priority or other part of the plan could be adjusted to better highlight this role.</p>	
<p>Negative</p> <p><u>Digital Exclusion</u> – The session highlighted the potential negative impacts of pursuing a digital agenda on people that either do not have the capacity to access, or do not feel confident accessing digital information.</p> <p>Action: Ensure that where digital solutions are proposed/developed, they are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-designed with the community for optimal ease of use by the broadest set of the community with different types of communication needs. • Ensure that digital solutions are offered alongside an alternative for people that cannot use the digital options. 	<p>Older people (Protected Characteristic: Age), people with learning disabilities or cognitive decline (Protected Characteristic: Disability), carers (Protected Characteristic: Sex/Age – indirectly due to disproportionate numbers of women in middle and older age groups that are carers).</p>

Socio-Economic	Affected populations
Positive	
Negative	

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Socio-Economic	Affected populations
<p><u>Joining things up/taking a holistic approach (tackling poverty)</u> – During the session a number of comments on the how the Strategic Plan could better illustrate how it connects with other strategies, initiatives and activities across East Lothian were raised. A particular focus was on the East Lothian Council agenda to tackle poverty via its plan to address the social determinants of poverty.</p> <p>Suggested Action: Include references in the Strategic Plan to the poverty suite of work that is taking place in the council and via third sector and grassroots community initiatives and link these with the strategic objectives and delivery priorities.</p>	<p>People living on the lowest incomes, people experiencing poverty and people experiencing financial pressure due to caring responsibilities.</p>
Marginalised Communities	Affected populations
<p>Positive</p> <p><u>Joining things up/taking a holistic approach/prevention and early intervention (mental health/substance use)</u> – During the session a number of comments on the how the Strategic Plan could better illustrate how it connects with other strategies, initiatives and activities across East Lothian were raised. The focus on mental health and the objective of early intervention/prevention was considered something that could positively impact on people with a wide range of challenges and conditions, such as people experiencing poor mental health, mental health crisis and struggles with addiction.</p>	<p>People experiencing mental health and wellbeing challenges, people engaging with addiction support, people working towards healthier lives with manageable/reduced/eliminated substance use.</p>

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Marginalised Communities	Affected populations
<p>Suggested Action: Include references in the Strategic Plan to the poverty suite of work that is taking place in the council and via third sector and grassroots community initiatives and link these with the strategic objectives and delivery priorities.</p>	
<p>Negative</p> <p>Rural Living Challenges - The session identified that people living in rural locations may be negatively impacted by some of the priorities in the Strategic Plan due to difficulty in home-based services getting to their homes, or difficulty in transporting themselves to community-based services if these services are located in larger towns with poor public transport connections, or an expensive private hire ride away from their location.</p> <p>It was considered important to acknowledge a number of intersecting factors that could affect this group and the cumulative/compounding effect this could have. Concerns were that this would lead in widening rural/urban health and social outcomes. Some of the intersecting factors were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced/reducing transport links from rural towns, especially in the East of the county. • Costs of private bus companies and taxis. • Sparse service of private and public bus services. 	<p>People living in rural areas.</p>

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Marginalised Communities	Affected populations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The disproportionate population of older people in rural residences. • Challenges related with age that affect higher proportions of older people such as sensory loss (leading to losing driving licences and reliance on public/costly private transport options). <p>Suggested Action: Consider ways to evaluate the cumulative impacts of a range of intersecting factors affecting people living in rural locations alongside proposals and changes. This can be done in a variety of ways and stages but should involve efforts to speak to people with lived experience of these challenges and include their feedback and/or voices in Integrated Impact Assessment and throughout planning and commissioning processes and reviews.</p>	

5. Is any part of this plan to be carried out wholly or partly by contractors? If so, how will equality, human rights (including children's rights, where applicable) be addressed?

Yes, some parts of this plan, when progressed to implementation will be carried out by contractors in the form of commissioned partners. Organisations that would like to be considered for work related to carrying out this plan must tender their interest via a formal process, outlining their policies and commitments to equality, human rights and children's rights. This commitment is given due regard during the selection process. All contractors are required to maintain the standards set out in IJB/HSCP policies. This is monitored via regular contract management conversations by HSCP employed leads.

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6. **Consider how you will communicate information about this plan to children and young people, those affected by sensory impairment, speech impairment, low level literacy or numeracy, learning difficulties or English as a foreign language? Please provide a summary of how the changes will be communicated and to which groups.**

The Strategic Plan will be published online on our website which includes a wide range of assistive technologies built-in to each page and document, such as Read Aloud, magnification, contrast changes, 'read' view, instant translation to other languages. The plan will also be available in Easy Read format and as a British Sign Language video.

To understand more about how we will communicate the Strategic Plan, please refer to the East Lothian IJB Communications and Engagement Plan 2026-2030 to see our commitments.

7. **Is any additional information or evidence required?**

No further evidence is required for this IIA. Evidence will be collected over the course of the Strategic Plan (2025-2030) in line with aspects identified in the How We Will Monitor Equality Impacts table (IIA Summary section of this report).

8. **Are there any negative impacts in section 4 for which there are no identified mitigating actions?**

No

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Appendix

Appendix 1 - Participants of the IIA

Name/Role	Job Title
Kate Thornback	Facilitator – Equalities and Engagement Officer - ELHSCP
Claire Goodwin	Session Lead - Strategic Programme Manager - ELHSCP
Alanna Stuart	Senior Business Support Administrator (note taker) - ELHSCP
Jill Jeans	Manager – Changes East Lothian
Janice McLeod	Chair – Musselburgh Area Partnership Health and Wellbeing Group
Jackie Bell	Chair – Dunbar and East Linton Health and Wellbeing Group / Secretary – Dunbar Day Centre
Robin Grant	Chair – North Berwick Coastal Area Health and Social Care Charity
Jane Cunningham	Strategic Planning and Commissioning Officer - ELHSCP
Libby Learmond	Operations Manager – Penumbra East Lothian
Jenny White	Chief Executive Officer - Carers Of East Lothian (COEL)
Daniel Strachan	Business Development Partner – Care Support Scotland
Laura Kerr	General Manager - Planning and Performance - ELHSCP
Maureen Allan	Chief Officer – VCEL
Emma Brown	Connected Communities Manager PSG - ELC
Sarah Gossner	Chief Nurse – ELHSCP
Ashley Hardy	Strategic Planning and Commissioning Officer, ELHSCP
Guy Whitehead	General Manager – Mental Health, Substance Use and Learning Disability - ELHSCP
Shannon Leslie	Service Manager Learning Disability - ELHSCP

Appendix 2

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Stage	Consultation / Engagement Details	Timescale
1. Initial key stakeholder engagement focusing on high level elements of the Strategic Plan (Vision, Strategic Objectives, Strategic Priorities)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Initial Engagement Session with SPG. Key stakeholder engagement. 	Feb – April 2025
2. Development of Consultation Draft	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information gathered during Stage 1 used to inform development of a Consultation Draft. Session with SPG on Consultation Draft prior to launching wider engagement. 	May – June 2025
3. Engagement on Consultation Draft	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wider engagement – including key stakeholders but promoting and opening up to others. 	July – Sept 2025
4. Development of Advanced Draft	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information gathered during Stage 3 used to inform development of an Advanced Draft. Advanced Draft to SPG for final feedback. 	Oct – Nov 2025
5. Final Strategic Plan to IJB for approval	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final Strategic Plan submitted to IJB for consideration / approval. 	Dec 2025

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6. Completion of feedback loop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communication on publication of IJB Strategic Plan, including report on consultation / engagement feedback and how this is reflected in the final Strategic Plan. 	Jan 2026
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